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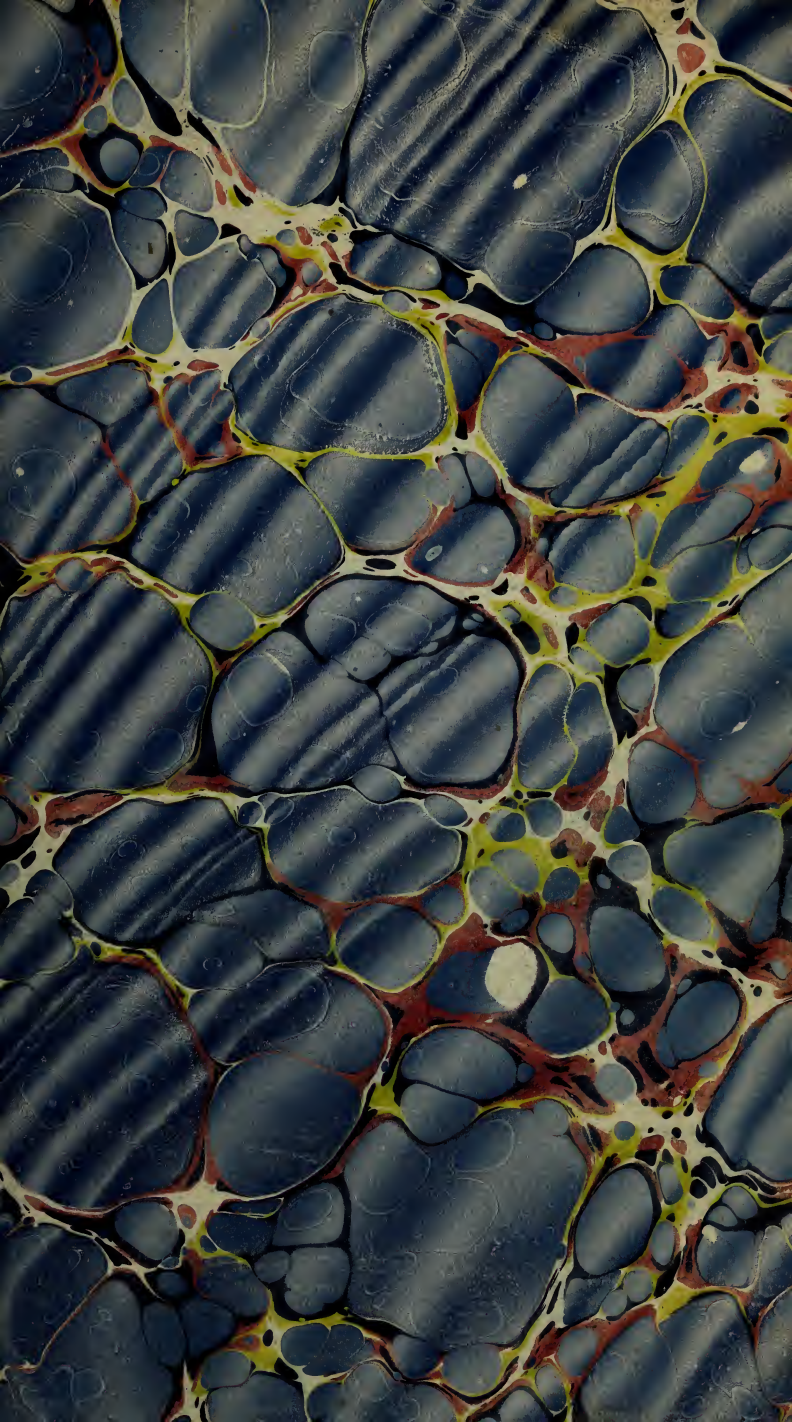
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# APPIUS:

A

## TRAGEDY.

*By John Moncreiff.*

As it is ACTED at the

### THEATRE-ROYAL,

IN

### COVENT-GARDEN.



LONDON:

Printed for A. MILLAR; and D. WILSON  
and T. DURHAM, in the Strand.

MDCCLV.

1755.

A. M. 1752

THEATRE ROYAL

THEATRE ROYAL

COMPTON

LONDON

Printed by J. Smith, at the Theatre Royal, in Pall Mall.





# P R O L O G U E

*Spoken by Mr. CIBBER.*

*HOW* great the Poet's Task, who, new to Fame,  
Seeks by the Drama to procure a Name!—  
The Muse's mighty Labour at an End,  
Friends he must have; — to judge, to recommend.—  
Few care to judge. — What the best Judges feel,  
Ev'n they, thro' modest Diffidence conceal.---  
Witlings and Critics of a bastard Kind,  
See Faults indeed; but are to Beauties blind.  
Such, keen to nibble at a Word or Phrase,  
Resign to Men of Sense the Task of Praise.---  
Some---rising Merit, from its Dawn, oppose:  
To such, a Rival is the worst of Foes.——  
'Twere endless, it were needless to relate  
The well-known Hardships of an Author's Fate.

Each Hardship, ev'ry Obstacle surpast,  
Virginius comes upon the Stage at last:  
That Father comes, whose dire, whose mournful Deed  
Rome from the bloody Yoke of Appius freed.  
For this his Name was to his Country dear.---  
What drew the Roman, claims the British Tear.

Our Author hopes slight Errors you'll excuse;  
Since who could ever boast a faultless Muse?  
His Roman Subject, with Attention due,  
With Candour treated, he submits to you.  
To your high Judgment he submits his Cause;  
Alike resign'd to Censure or Applause.---  
Britons! your native Equity display;  
And judge, like Romans, of what Romans say.

# DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

## M E N.

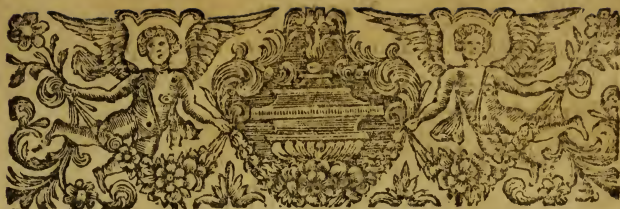
APPIUS CLAUDIUS, <i>Chief of the</i>	}	Mr. SPARKS.	
<i>Decemvirs,</i>			
L. VALERIUS,	} Roman <i>Senators,</i>	Mr. RIDOUT.	
M. HORATIUS,		Mr. ANDERSON.	
A. VIRGINIUS, <i>the Father</i>	} of Vir-	Mr. SHERIDAN.	
L. ICILIUS, <i>the Lover</i>		ginia,	Mr. SMITH.
P. NUMITORIUS, <i>Uncle</i>			Mr. STEVENS.
M. CLAUDIUS, <i>the Minister of Appius,</i>		Mr. GIBSON.	
C. SICINIUS,	} <i>Plebeian Chiefs,</i>	Mr. BENNET.	
M. DUELLIUS,		Mr. WHITE.	
M. POMPONIUS,		Mr. R. SMITH.	
FLAMINIUS,		Mr. REDMAN.	

## W O M E N.

VIRGINIA,	Mrs. BELLAMY.
CAMILLA,	Mrs. ELMY.
DORA,	Miss COPEN.

*Plebeians, Lictors, &c.*      SCENE, Rome.





# APP I U S.

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## ACT I. SCENE I.

*Scene the Forum.*

VALERIUS, HORATIUS.

VALERIUS.



HORATIUS, while I reason with myself,  
While I compare the present with the past,  
Methinks the Spirit of the Roman People  
Can never brook this Usurpation long.

HORATIUS.

Alas ! I tremble when I think of APPIUS.  
His wild Ambition, like a wasteful Deluge,  
Has ravag'd Rome. Majestic Liberty,  
The Pledge of public Happiness, the Pride  
And Bulwark of our Fathers ;—is no more.

B

VALERIUS.

VALERIUS.

Observe and trace him thro' the various Steps  
Of his outrageous Conduct; you'll perceive  
That such a Scene of bold Iniquity  
Must quickly end.

HORATIUS.

Is not the legal Time  
Of the Decemvirate expir'd already?  
Long since expir'd?—Ah! let us mourn, VALERIUS,  
The fatal Error of the great Republic,  
When she, with giddy Confidence, resign'd  
Her Gem of Liberty, that dear-bought Gem,  
In Trust to Men like APPIUS.

VALERIUS.

The Pretence  
Was fair, which mov'd us to create Decemvirs;  
And with Authority supreme to vest  
Their sacred College:—that they might, uncurb'd,  
Frame and establish, with resistless Sanction,  
Laws, founded on the great Originals  
Of Athens and of Sparta.—But, in truth,  
There was another Reason, more persuasive,  
Tho' less avow'd; and scarce perhaps observ'd  
Ev'n by the Minds it work'd upon.

HORATIUS.

What Reason?

VALERIUS.

The young Republic, like a wayward Steed  
Unbroken to the Bit, with headstrong Will,  
From the smooth middle Track of Freedom err'd  
To wild Extremes.—By Turns patrician Power,  
Oppression and the Pride of Wealth prevail'd:—  
By Turns Sedition, kindling at the Beck  
Of Tribunes, popularly rag'd, and threaten'd

Mere Anarchy.—Rome's Consuls and her Tribunes  
 So sorely vex'd the Commonwealth by Turns,  
 That, weary of them, for a short Repose,  
 We listen'd to the Reasons which advis'd  
 The first Creation of Decemvirs.

HORATIUS.

Rome  
 Unwisely trusted in their Hands, VALERIUS,  
 An uncontrollable Extent of Power.—  
 Still more unwisely, when the too-long Date  
 Of their first Magistracy was expir'd,  
 She for a second Year rechose them.

VALERIUS.

Mildly  
 The first Decemvirs govern'd Rome. Ev'n APPIUS,  
 Tho' foremost in the Number, and supreme  
 Above his Colleagues, artfully put on  
 Such gaudy Semblance of uncommon Zeal  
 To serve his Country, and so rich a Shew  
 Of Affability and humble Greatness,  
 That he won Estimation and loud Praise  
 From all except the wiser few.

HORATIUS.

From these  
 His fair smooth Mask of Popularity  
 Could never hide that Serpent of Ambition,  
 Which since has stung the Commonwealth.

VALERIUS.

The Gods  
 Have long bereav'd him of his better Judgment.  
 His Pow'r depended on the People's Favour;  
 When, like a Changeling, he avow'd himself  
 At once to be their mortal Enemy;  
 Resum'd his native Arrogance, and heap'd  
 Mean wanton Insults on the poor Plebeians.

HORATIUS.

What dire Effects of Insolence and Lust  
Have we beheld!--What Scenes of Blood and Rapine!--  
Scenes, which the Spirit of our Ancestors  
Would ne'er have suffer'd.

VALERIUS.

Rome inherits still  
That free-born Spirit, which our great Forefathers  
Dauntless exerted in their Country's Cause.  
So long as this prevails, brief will be found  
The Date of lawless Pow'r.—Such is the Force  
Of this high Principle, this godlike Frame;  
That but a few, possess of it, suffice  
To wrest a Tyrant from his Throne; to loose  
The Bands of Kingdoms.—Where a single BRUTUS,  
A great PUBLICOLA, or COCLES lives,  
No TARQUIN can be safe. Slaves, at their Call,  
Rouz'd into Men, will dash their Fetters from them;  
And claim th' unalienable Rights of Nature.  
Let us embrace, my Friend; and by the Manes  
Of our immortal Grandfires swear, that we,  
Like them, will raise the languishing Republic,  
Or fall together in the bold Attempt.

HORATIUS.

I swear it solemnly, VALERIUS.  
Let us, with Ardour, snatch the first Occasion,  
The first fair Handle, which, improv'd with Skill,  
May cause a general Revolt.

VALERIUS.

I've heard,  
Just heard a dreadful Rumour from the Camp:—  
That not the Sabines, but the Sword of APPIUS  
Has murder'd SICCIUS DENTATUS.



HORATIUS.

Hah !

Should that be true ; nought but the Tyrant's Blood  
 Can glut our Rage.—Rome must avenge her Hero,  
 Her hoary Champion ; in the Field of War  
 Highly distinguish'd for his matchless Valour :  
 Still more distinguish'd for his patriot Zeal  
 Against the Foes of Liberty.

VALERIUS.

'Twas that

Which kindled the Decemvir's subtle Wrath  
 A Legate's sacred Function to confer.  
 'This Bait of Honour took. The gallant Siccius,  
 Impatient to retrieve his Country's Glory,  
 Flew to the Camp ; and perish'd, as they say,  
 Devoted to the Sword of vile Assassins.—  
 If true, this Rumour will be quickly follow'd  
 By sure Intelligence.

HORATIUS.

To know the Truth

Merits our first Attention. Let us go ;—  
 Let us inquire.—Such an atrocious Deed  
 Suits our high Plot.

VALERIUS.

Now the great Wheels of Fate  
 Are all in Motion. Ev'ry Moment now  
 Teems with Events, such as conspire to quicken  
 The Course of mighty Revolutions.—Come.—[*Exeunt.*

## S C E N E II.

*Enter ICILIUS and CAMILLA.*

ICILIUS.

How she so much as dar'd to speak her Errand,  
 Amazes me.—Did she not know, CAMILLA,

That you had long supply'd a Mother's Place  
 To fair VIRGINIA ; forming her to Virtue,  
 With honest Care ?— Could she believe that you  
 Would, for an infamous Reward, betray  
 Your sacred Charge into the lewd Embrace  
 Of a foul Ravisher ?—Abandon'd Wretch !

CAMILLA.

I blush to think that Nature can admit  
 A Woman so completely void of Shame.  
 She laugh'd at Honour : Virtue was her Sport :  
 Pow'r, Pleasure, Wealth her only Theme of Praise.—  
 Impatient of her wild licentious Talk,  
 I sternly bid her cease to violate  
 A House where Chastity, where spotless Honour  
 Had ever dwelt.

ICILIUS.

Can'st thou not guess, CAMILLA,  
 Who this Patrician is, that madly seeks  
 To grasp the Portion of ICILIUS,  
 My much-lov'd Bride, in his polluted Arms ?

CAMILLA.

She magnify'd his Pow'r ; extoll'd his Rank,  
 His Wealth, his Honours. Lavish of her Words,  
 At length she titled him the Prince of Rome.---  
 I mention'd APPIUS.---At the very Name  
 She seem'd to start, as conscious of an Error ;  
 But, while she strongly labour'd to remove  
 My first Suspicion, she the more confirm'd it.

ICILIUS.

'Tis he.---Confusion ! does not the Decemvir  
 Know that to me the Virgin is betroth'd ?---  
 Am I so cheap in his Opinion grown,  
 So fit to bear Indignities ; that he  
 Shall dare, ev'n in his secret Wish, to blast

My

My bridal Honours ?---Heav'n so speed my Love  
As he shall rue the bold Conception ;---rue  
Such Insolence of Hope.

CAMILLA.

I fear, alas !

Some dreadful Act of Violence.

ICILIUS.

Of Force

He dares not think ; since well he knows VIRGINIUS  
Commands a Legion, and is highly lov'd  
By both our Armies in the Field.—Me too  
The Tyrant knows ; and, if I should say, fears,  
Rome would not mark me for an idle Boaster.

CAMILLA.

What will not Tyranny, the Pride of Pow'r,  
The Rage of Lust attempt ?

ICILIUS.

Although, CAMILLA,

Fear is an Alien to my Soul, thus threaten'd,  
I'll join to Courage wary Circumspection ;  
And, strait convening all my Friends, prepare  
Force to repel, should Force presume to lift  
His ruffian Hand.—Haste to my Fair One !--Hide  
This Plot of Shame.---Wear not that Look of Sorrow,  
Lest it should rouse Conjecture.---Urge my Passion,  
To thee best known.---Its vehement Increase  
Thou well hast mark'd, 'till grafted on Esteem,  
It rests and glories in supreme Perfection.—  
O teach her too strongly to feel the Charms  
Of mutual Love :—to glow, CAMILLA, teach her  
With chaste Desire and bridal Expectations.—  
Haste.—As you both are wont, repair at Noon  
To PORTIA's House. I'll meet VIRGINIA there.—

CAMILLA.

What if we should apprize VIRGINIUS ?

ICILIUS.

No ;

Not yet. 'Twould give him needless Pain.

CAMILLA.

Farewell.— [*Exit.*

Fate with the Genius and the Gods of Rome  
 Now sits in Council.—'Tis their secret Force,  
 Their Wrath which in the Breast of APPIUS kindles  
 Such a wild Flame.—Barely to dream of Hopes,  
 Argues him utterly bereft of Reason.—  
 Succeed !—It is impossible.—This Arm,  
 Rais'd in the Cause of Love, would singly baffle  
 His utmost Pow'r : Then how shall he withstand  
 A People's Rage ?—Do I not see VALERIUS  
 Pass in the Forum, with HORATIUS, yonder ?—  
 I'll follow them with rapid Pace. They first  
 Shall know this infamous and bold Attempt ;  
 So fit to rouse the public Indignation.—  
 Now Vengeance hovers o'er the Tyrant's Head.--[*Exit.*

## S C E N E III.

*Scene the Palace of APPIUS.*

APPIUS.

No longer Love ;—'tis Madness that I feel :  
 For since that more than mortal Blaze of Beauty,  
 Like Heav'n's resistless Flame, first smote my Sight ;—  
 I have not slept.—Incurable Desire  
 Burns, like a Fever, in my Blood.—At length  
 I must have Ease from racking Misery ;  
 This Rage of unquench'd Appetite.—To-day

Love's



Love's Triumph comes ; in the full Feast of Fancy,  
 VIRGINIA's Charms.—If all-procuring Gold,  
 If sweet Persuasion fail, the Vultur Force  
 Shall boldly seize her in his mighty Talons,  
 And bear the trembling Victim to my Bed :—  
 But MARCUS CLAUDIUS is return'd.—

## S C E N E IV.

*Enter* MARCUS CLAUDIUS.

—What Hopes  
 Of sweet Success? What Tidings dost thou bring?  
 Speak ; is CAMILLA gain'd to serve my Passion?

MARCUS CLAUDIUS.

CAMILLA strangely baffles all our Art.  
 Not for the World would she commit a Trespass  
 Against her simple Honesty.

APPIUS.

Confusion !

What artless Instrument hast thou employ'd  
 To practise on her with seducing Gifts?—  
 Was it thy boasted Instrument, SEMPRONIA?

MARCUS CLAUDIUS.

One lives not, APPIUS, fitter to corrupt  
 All Sense of Honour in the Minds of Women.  
 She bade her freely name her own Conditions ;  
 Assuring her that fair VIRGINIA's Lover  
 Would in his Bounty, like a Prince, exceed them.

APPIUS.

Vain unavailing Promises ! she should  
 At once have offer'd ample Sums of Gold.

MARCUS CLAUDIUS.

She did :—Sums that would tempt VALERIUS  
 To quit his stubborn Principles ; to bend

Beneath

Beneath thy Scepter. By repeated Handfuls,  
She pour'd the shining Offer in her Lap.

APPIUS.

Sure that was irresistible.

MARCUS CLAUDIUS.

With Scorn,

Her proud Integrity rejected all.

Forsooth she answer'd that she was a Roman ;  
And would not, for the Wealth of APPIUS,  
Betray her Trust.

APPIUS.

Her Mention of my Name  
Shews that on me she fastens her Suspicion :—  
But I regard her not. Since mild Attempts  
Prove unsuccessful here, I'll have Recourse  
To sudden Means of Violence.

MARCUS CLAUDIUS.

For that

A Project is already form'd.

APPIUS.

What Project ?

MARCUS CLAUDIUS.

I'll seize and to my House the Fair One lead.—  
Should her Relations, should the boist'rous Bridegroom  
Oppose this Act, I'll next appeal to you ;  
For I have fram'd so plausible a Story,  
Yourself would half believe it.—Such my Scheme.

APPIUS.

Fly to accomplish it : for by the Gods  
I cannot brook Delay.

MARCUS CLAUDIUS.

About this Hour

VIRGINIA thro' the Forum daily passes.  
I'll watch and seize her.

APPIUS.

APPIUS.

With my Licitors strait,  
And with my young patrician Guard, I'll hasten  
To my Tribunal.

MARCUS CLAUDIUS.

Soon expect me there.— [*Exit.*

APPIUS.

The Voice of Reason calls aloud :—" Forbear.  
" If not the sacred Cause of Innocence ;  
" Let Fear restrain thee from this brutal Action.  
" Shun TARQUIN's Fate."—As soon might Reason still  
The boist'rous Sea, or check the Whirlwind's Course,  
As stem this Torrent of Desire, which swells  
Above all Bounds, scorning the frail Obstructions  
Which Fear or Fancy forms.—

S C E N E V.

*Enter a MESSENGER.*

Say, Roman ;---whence ?

MESSENGER.

From Algidum.---Your Colleagues the Decemvirs,  
Have sent me to report the shameful Tidings  
Of their Defeat.

APPIUS.

Have then the Legions fled ?

MESSENGER.

The angry Legions were resolv'd to fly :  
For, at the first Appearance of the Æqui,  
They suddenly forsook their Camp.

APPIUS.

Perdition !

Resign their Camp !---Base and degenerate ;---  
Their sullen Ancestors, who likewise dar'd  
To shame themselves with a seditious Flight,

Yet

Yet scorn'd this grosser Infamy ; reserv'd,  
 By Fate, for a still viler Race of Romans.---  
 These mean, audacious, angry Fugitives ;  
 Of what do they complain ?

MESSENGER.

I fear to tell it;

APPIUS.

Think not that I regard their factious Murmurs :  
 But freely speak ; what Reason give they ?

MESSENGER.

This.

Gall'd by the Yoke of lawless Tyranny,  
 They will not fight for Servitude and Chains.

APPIUS.

Go back : Say to my Colleagues the Decemvirs,  
 I charge them, for a laudable Example  
 Worthy their Imitation, to reflect  
 With what Severity my noble Father  
 Chastiz'd the Legions under his Command ;  
 When, in a stubborn and rebellious Mood,  
 They fled, like Cowards, to disgrace their Leader.---  
 Traitors !---Why sleeps the decimating Ax ?  
 Ask the Decemvirs that.---Go ; tell them ; APPIUS,  
 Sick of their foolish Lenity, requires  
 Stern military Justice in its Rigour.---

MESSENGER.

Stern Justice and the decimating Ax !---  
 Vain Words, Decemvir.---Military Justice,  
 The Terror and the Threats of Discipline  
 Must now submit to military Rage. [*Aside, and Exit.*

APPIUS.

And wilt thou leave me, fickle Fortune ?---Stay.  
 With a rich Price I bought thy fleeting Favour ;  
 When, for a Tyrant's Name, my solid Peace

I poorly



I poorly barter'd.---This bold Mutiny,  
(Curse on the Legions !) this rebellious Flight  
Is full of ruinous Presage.---It threatens  
To-morrow with some dreadful dire Event.---  
Then let To-morrow fear.---The present Day  
Comes furnish'd with a more delightful Task.---  
Away with future, with To-morrow Chances :  
Love reigns To-day.---Perhaps VIRGINIA  
By this Time waits at my Tribunal. Haste,  
Haste, APPIUS ; fly to seize the proffer'd Bliss.---  
I'm sick of Pow'r : 'tis Vanity, Vexation.  
Henceforth my Lot (hear my Petition, JOVE)  
My Portion henceforth be the Bliss of Love. [Exit.





## A C T II. S C E N E I.

*Scene the Forum.*

SICINIUS, DUELLIUS, POMPONIUS, *and Plebeians.*

SICINIUS.

**M**UST this Tribunal, this opprobrious Seat  
Of insolent Oppression, stand for ever?  
To what, O Rome, to what a shameful Bondage  
Art thou reduc'd?

DUELLIUS.

Our Hopes, SICINIUS,  
The final Hopes of Rome and Liberty  
Chiefly depend on the two great Patricians,  
VALERIUS and HORATIUS. Next to them,  
ICILIUS, late our most distinguish'd Tribune,  
Forbids us to despair.

POMPONIUS.

Let me but live  
To see the Tribuneship restor'd (that Bulwark  
Which, to secure the native Rights of Freemen,  
Our Fathers rais'd)---and I desire no more.

DUELLIUS.

POMPONIUS, yes; now that the People's Voice  
Grows loud for Liberty; the Tribunes here  
Shall quickly reassume their sacred Office;---  
An active bold ICILIUS at their Head.  
He, well approv'd in former high Disputes,  
Can best enforce our old Agrarian Claim,  
Our Right to share the conquer'd Lands.---On him  
My Suffrage waits.

SICINIUS.

SICINIUS.

And mine, DUELLIUS.

POMPONIUS.

And mine.

DUELLIUS.

He claims the Suffrages of all:  
What say ye, Fellow-Citizens and Friends?

PLEBEIANS.

ICILIUS, ICILIUS, ICILIUS.—

S C E N E II.

*Enter APPIUS and Licitors.*

APPIUS.

Say, whence this Uproar?---Wherefore is the Name  
Of turbulent ICILIUS shouted?—Peace,  
Ye Sons of Faction, Peace. [*He goes to the Tribunal.*

SICINIUS.

With what unblushing Arrogance he treats  
His free-born Fellow-Citizens?

DUELLIUS.

Observe,  
There is a strange Disorder in his Visage.

POMPONIUS.

Now mark his eager Look!

APPIUS.

VIRGINIA comes! [*Aside.*

S C E N E III.

*Enter NUMITORIUS, MARCUS CLAUDIUS leading  
VIRGINIA, and CAMILLA clinging to her Arm.*

VIRGINIA.

Save, NUMITORIUS! dear CAMILLA, save me  
From this bold Man!

NUMITORIUS.

NUMITORIUS.

Unheard-of Insolence !

My Sister's Child a Slave !

CAMILLA.

Help, Romans ! Help !

O do not suffer this abandon'd Ruffian,  
Here in the Forum, in the Face of Day,  
With lawless Force to rob these feeble Arms  
Of what is dearer to me than my Life.

APPIUS.

What mean'st thou, Woman, in thy frantic Rage ?  
Is there no Judge of Injuries in Rome,  
That thus to the low Rabble thou prefer'st  
The Voice of thy Complaint ?

CAMILLA.

O Man of Pow'r,  
Let me adjure thee by the mighty Gods  
To spare my Child !

APPIUS.

Art thou the Virgin's Mother ?

CAMILLA.

Indeed I am not ; yet I strongly feel  
A Parent's Love.

NUMITORIUS.

My Sister NUMITORIA,

While yet her Daughter was an Infant, dy'd ;  
But this fond faithful Matron ever since  
Has been a second Parent to her.

MARCUS CLAUDIUS.

APPIUS,

I have a Master's Title to VIRGINIA ;  
For she is Daughter to a Slave of mine :  
As such I seiz'd her.

CAMILLA.



CAMILLA.

Find ICILIUS :

For Heav'n's sake haste, DUELLIUS: find him, bring him.

Go first to PORTIA's House : there he propos'd

At Noon to meet us. [Exit DUELLIUS.

MARCUS CLAUDIUS.

To her native Home

I would have carry'd her by gentle Means,  
Had not Camilla, conscious of my Right,  
Rais'd by her Exclamations such a Tumult,  
That I was forc'd to fly for Justice here.

APPIUS.

Hast thou sufficient Evidence to prove  
This strange unlikely Claim ?

MARCUS CLAUDIUS.

More than sufficient,

When that shall be requir'd. In the mean time,  
I claim Possession as a Master's Due.

NUMITORIUS.

VIRGINIA's Father, with his trusty Sword,  
Serves in the Field against the hostile Æqui:  
While he perhaps bleeds on the Bed of War,  
In Rome's Defence, shall an audacious Coward,  
A Drone of Peace, with mock Pretensions, claim  
His only Child?—Not 'till VIRGINIUS comes  
Can Justice hear the shameless Cause ;—far less  
Grant that Decision which the well-known CLAUDIUS  
For a vile Purpose seeks.—The Father absent,  
By Reason's Rule, his chaste, his virgin Daughter,  
Safe in her Fame and Freedom, must abide  
Under my Roof ;—a Kinsman's sacred Roof.

APPIUS.

The Law supports your Adversary's Plea.

C

NUMITORIUS.

## NUMITORIUS.

Is not Possession by the Law secur'd,  
'Till he who boasts a better Right obtains  
A formal fair Decision in his Favour?

## APPIUS.

How much the solid Liberties of Rome  
Employ'd my Thoughts and Zeal, by me propos'd,  
That very Law most fully witnesses,  
Shaming the Tongue of idle Defamation :  
But then, then only, can the Law be deem'd  
The Bulwark of our Rights, when its true Meaning,  
Unwarp'd by loose Interpretation, holds  
An even Course, without respect of Persons.—  
Was the pretended Father present ;—he  
Would doubtless have the first and fairest Claim :  
Next him the Master's Title to Possession  
Takes place of all, ev'n of the nearest Kindred.—  
From me far be it, Romans, to refuse,  
Whatever Time they shall deem necessary,  
To fetch the Father home : But that Delay  
Shall not prevent a previous Act of Justice.—  
Thus therefore I decree—that MARCUS CLAUDIUS  
Have what he legally demands, Possession ;  
Plighting his Word, that when VIRGINIUS,  
The Bondmaid's long reputed Father, comes,  
She shall be strait produc'd.—In evil Hour  
(Destruction to my Hopes !) the jealous Bridegroom !

## S C E N E IV.

*Enter ICILIUS and DUELLIUS.*

Go, take Possession, CLAUDIUS.

ICILIUS.

Hah ! Possession !——

Villain, stand off.

MARCUS

MARCUS CLAUDIUS.

It is decreed, ICILIUS.

ICILIUS.

What is decreed?

MARCUS CLAUDIUS.

That, 'till VIRGINIUS comes,

Mine is the Title to Possession here.

*[Offers to seize VIRGINIA.]*

ICILIUS.

If thou hast any Fear of Death, retire.—

Away—be gone.

APPIUS.

Remove ICILIUS, Lictors.

ICILIUS.

First take my Life, Decemvir. While I breathe,

Vain is your expectation to succeed

In this gross Act of Tyranny; this Plot

So subtly fram'd, so carefully conceal'd

Under the Mask of Law.—Tyrant, forbear,

Nor seek to spoil me of a Bridegroom's Right.

I mean a spotless Virgin to espouse,

Not one defil'd by your rapacious Lust.

What! is it not enough your bold Ambition

Has trampled under Foot the great Republic,

Our Consuls, Tribunes, and our free Assemblies?

Shall not the Honour of our Wives and Children

Be safe, Decemvir, from your lewd Assaults?

This more than Tarquin-scheme of Violation,

Would make ev'n Babes and Women rise in Arms,

If Heav'n and Men should wink at it: Then cease,

Or, thus attack'd, I'll rouse a Storm of Vengeance,

Which on the whole Decemvirate shall burst.

Implacable VIRGINIUS shall advance,

With all the Legions at his Heels, to Rome;

And, while he blows, the Trumpet of Revenge,

Where that iniquitous Tribunal stands,  
 Grim Havock and the Hounds of War shall feast  
 On human Sacrifice.

APPIUS.

Peace, wordy Boaster.

Seize, bear her off.

ICILIUS.

Who but attempts to seize her,  
 Might safer seize the Tiger in his Den.

MARCUS CLAUDIUS.

To me your boist'rous Speech, ICILIUS,  
 Seems light as Air: It moves my Laughter. Thus,  
 I boldly thus assert my Right.

ICILIUS.

Retire.

APPIUS.

Assist him, Liçtors.

ICILIUS.

Help, my Countrymen.

[MARCUS CLAUDIUS and the Liçtors, threatened  
 by the People, retire.]

APPIUS.

You all perceive that turbulent ICILIUS  
 Labours to kindle high the Flame of Discord:  
 He hopes (I scan the Motive of his Heart)  
 To get the factious Tribuneship restor'd,  
 If he can raise a popular Sedition;  
 But I for this will leave him no Pretence.  
 The Virgin shall remain at Liberty,  
 'Till he who bears the Name of Father comes;  
 Provided that he comes To-day. From Rome  
 The Distance to the Gates of Algidum  
 Scarce for an Hour employs the Horseman's Speed:—  
 Be this your Care; for, mark my Words, ICILIUS,

Before



Before yon Sun, which flames with mid-day Lustre,  
 Has scatter'd from the West his feeble Rays,  
 I will decide this Cause; and so decide it,  
 That neither you nor a rebellious Rabble  
 Shall dare to murmur at my Sentence.

[Exit.

ICILIUS.

Tyrant,

I fear thee not. To me thy Menaces  
 Are arrogant as vain.—Hah! doom VIRGINIA  
 To Servitude and Infamy!—Decemvir,  
 If I could brook an Injury like this,  
 I were no Roman, but a Slave indeed.—  
 How fares it with my Love?

VIRGINIA.

As one just rescu'd  
 From something worse than Death, I to the Gods  
 Devoutly render, as becomes me, Thanks:  
 Herein most happy, that Heav'n's Instrument  
 Is he for whom I chiefly would desire  
 To lengthen Life. Accept my Thanks, ICILIUS,  
 All I have henceforth left to give; since thou  
 Mak'st me a Beggar in my poor Returns,  
 Already Lord of my Affections.

ICILIUS.

Hah!

This exquisite Confession of the Soul,  
 'This sudden Language of the Heart, now first  
 With Clearness utter'd, on my ravish'd Ear,  
 Like Music, dwells. Divinest of thy Sex!  
 Thy Words transport me to the wild Extreme  
 Of Raptures not to be describ'd, of Bliss  
 Too great for mortal Man.—Now, by the Gods,  
 I almost thank thee, Tyrant!

C 3

VIRGINIA.

VIRGINIA.

Still I fear

The Storm of Danger is not wholly past.

ICILIUS.

He dares not hurt thee, for his Life.

VIRGINIA.

Alas!

That dreadful Man is void of Fear and Shame :

He laughs at Pity and the Tears of Women.—

My Father absent too ! Did he but know

What Danger threatens me, not the World's Empire

Would slacken his important Haste to save me.

CAMILLA.

Think, think what's to be done, ICILIUS.

ICILIUS.

I'll send my Brother to the Camp.

NUMITORIUS.

My Son

Shall likewise go.

CAMILLA.

Let them, with eager Speed,

Fly ; to prevent the Tyrant's Messengers.

There's not a Moment to be lost : Away.——

ICILIUS.

First from thy lovely Cheek O let me wipe

Those precious Tears.—Those Tears, VIRGINIA,

Shall cost the Tyrant Blood.

NUMITORIUS.

Haste, and return

Thy Bride to meet, secure from Violation

Under my Roof.

ICILIUS.

Thither I'll fly, my Fair One :

To sooth thy Fears, to comfort, to protect thee,

Shall sweetly then engross a Lover's Care. [Exeunt.

## S C E N E V.

*Scene the Palace of APPIUS.**Enter APPIUS.*

APPIUS.

Detected in my Plot!--Repuls'd!--Dishonour'd!--  
 Upbraided grossly by Plebeians!--Now  
 Well may the gloomy, the remorseful Fit  
 Of Conscience come.---Absurd!--Was this a Time  
 For idle, boyish Schemes of Love, while Fortune  
 Severely frowns, while Shame and Guilt distract me?—  
 The Legions in Uproar!--DENTATUS murder'd!--  
 Our Foes triumphant in the Field!--All Rome  
 Defil'd with Tears and Blood!--Am I the Cause?--  
 Is it to me the great Republic owes  
 Her foul Dishonours and her slaughter'd Heroes?--  
 How shall I justify to Rome and Heaven  
 My Breach of Trust and lawless Usurpation?---  
 Am I a Traytor to my Country?---Hah!--  
 It is a dreadful Question which I ask  
 My conscious Self.---Art thou not, APPIUS,  
 A gross Oppressor? An inhuman Tyrant?---  
 I am.---The Woes of Life, together summ'd,  
 Would light appear, if weigh'd with this Reflection,  
 This single Whisper of the Mind.---

## S C E N E VI.

*Enter MARCUS CLAUDIUS.*

MARCUS CLAUDIUS.

Hail, APPIUS!--

What means his mournful Attitude? He seems  
 Like one just smitten by the Thunderer's Arm;

While in his Looks fits wild Astonishment,  
And mars the Function of his Senses.---APPIUS!—  
Say, why this sudden, this unseemly Start?

APPIUS.

You come unwish'd for, at a dreadful Hour,  
While I was summing up the long Account  
Of all my Crimes.

MARCUS CLAUDIUS.

Away: I blush to hear it.

APPIUS.

Ah! Villain! Thou should'st rather weep, to think  
That thou hast been the fatal Minister,  
Whose Instigation and pernicious Counsels  
Have made me what I am; a foul Reproach  
To all my great Progenitors and Kindred,  
A Scourge to Rome, a Terror to myself.

MARCUS CLAUDIUS.

Such poor, such idle Thoughts as these betray  
A Mind unequal to the Task of Empire.

APPIUS.

Guilt vainly triumphs in a borrow'd Mask;  
Vainly, the Face and Heart at Variance, seems  
Possess'd of gay Tranquillity.--No, CLAUDIUS,  
The vicious Man must feel the Rack of Conscience!—  
It is the Curse of Nature and of Heaven.

MARCUS CLAUDIUS.

Resign, resign this lawless Dignity,  
Which sits so heavy on your peevish Conscience.

APPIUS.

I ought; but wild Ambition hinders it:  
Besides I cannot now resign with Safety.

MARCUS CLAUDIUS.

O yes, your Roman, your plebeian Judges,  
Will doubtless be to mild Compassion mov'd,

When



When you for Mercy plead with humble Voice,  
 When the great Name of APPIUS CLAUDIUS  
 Shall meanly stoop to that.---Go, beg to live.

APPIUS.

First shall they tear me in a thousand Pieces,  
 And fix some Portion of my scatter'd Limbs  
 On ev'ry Gate and Battlement of Rome.

MARCUS CLAUDIUS.

Then boldly persevere.

APPIUS.

I must.

MARCUS CLAUDIUS.

O Shame!

Is this a Time for such Reflections, APPIUS,  
 Such gloomy Thinking, while Occasion wooes you,  
 While it invites you to the Bed of Love  
 With sweet Temptation?---Have you then forgot  
 The fair VIRGINIA's Charms?

APPIUS.

VIRGINIA!——

Mad Love rekindles at the very Name.

MARCUS CLAUDIUS.

And will you leave her, as a worthless Prey,  
 Untasted to your Rival?

APPIUS.

By the Gods

You touch me in a tender Part, and move  
 The Master-wheel of all.——Thus, doubly fetter'd,  
 By strong Ambition, and by stronger Love,  
 In vain I struggle to get free.—Then cease,  
 Thou foul infernal Viper of Remorse,  
 To gnaw me with envenom'd Tooth.—What say'st thou?  
 Is ev'ry Thing dispos'd as I commanded?

MARCUS CLAUDIUS.

All, all.

APPIUS.

What of VIRGINIA's Father?

MARCUS CLAUDIUS.

He never can escape the Snares of Horsemen,  
Which I have posted in his Way to Rome.

APPIUS.

But if he should! ———

MARCUS CLAUDIUS.

Let us suppose he should,  
I find no Terror in his Presence here :  
The trusty Soldiers of the Capitol,  
Plac'd round your high Tribunal in their Ranks,  
Shall keep the grumbling Populace in Awe.  
I laugh to think how the proud-tongu'd ICILIUS  
Will vindicate the Honour of his Bride :  
It will be perfect Luxury of Mirth,  
To see that turbulent and haughty Boaster,  
Foaming and mad with unavailing Rage.

APPIUS.

The Hour approaches fast. See that my Friends  
All hold themselves in Readiness ;—assur'd  
That, or VIRGINIA must be mine To-day,  
Or the Decemvirs fall.

[Exit.

MARCUS CLAUDIUS.

A Mixture strange  
Of Vice and Virtue ! This imperfect Sinner,  
Sins that he may repent ; and then repents,  
That he may sin again.---What if he should,  
By such wild Fits of Horror seiz'd, at last  
Resign his Power?---Where then shall I be?--Gods !  
I must take care. My very Life depends  
On his becoming, like myself, confirm'd  
Against the Sallies of Remorse and Shame. ———

Here

Here Wisdom can perceive no middle Course :  
He should be wholly good, or wholly bad.  
A Prince like him, that either is by Halves,  
Must soon, despis'd as well as hated, fall  
To public Scorn and Rage an easy Victim.

[Exit.



ACT



## A C T III. S C E N E I.

*Scene the Forum.*

VIRGINIA, CAMILLA.

VIRGINIA.

**B**UT are we safe?---O sweet Security,  
The close Companion of my guiltless Youth,  
Now whither art thou fled?---Speak, are we safe?

CAMILLA.

Fear not, my Child : The chaste DIANA's Temple,  
With awful Neighbourhood, protects thee.

VIRGINIA.

Look,  
From yonder Gate a Crowd of young Patricians  
Here bend their Eyes.

CAMILLA.

'Tis the Decemvir's Palace,  
To which these lawless Libertines resort.

VIRGINIA.

And now forth issues MARCUS CLAUDIUS !  
O save us from him, great DIANA, save us !

CAMILLA.

Fall swift Perdition on his Head.---But mark,  
He goes, and all his lewd Companions follow.---  
Nay, now compose thyself.

VIRGINIA.

ICILIUS,  
Forgetful of my Danger and my Fears,  
Why do'st thou linger thus ! Unkindly linger ?

CAMILLA.



CAMILLA.

Did you but know the passionate Request  
 ICILIUS whisper'd as he went, alas !  
 You would not tax him with the least Unkindness :  
 He thus, oft deeply sighing, spoke---“ CAMILLA,  
 “ While I to kindle Rage in ev'ry Bosom  
 “ Labour, thine is a Mother's Province : She  
 “ With filial Observation marks thy Words :  
 “ For Heav'n's Sake comfort her. Let her not weep :  
 “ At my Return let me not find her weeping,  
 “ Or I perforce shall mingle Tears, and add  
 “ Distraction to the gloomy Scene.” This said,  
 The manly Tear came rushing to his Eye,  
 Which striving to conceal, he forthwith left me.

VIRGINIA.

Now lead, CAMILLA, to the sacred Shrine  
 Of this great Virgin Goddess. There I'll kneel,  
 And wash her Image with my Tears.

CAMILLA.

Behold,

ICILIUS comes.---

## S C E N E II.

*Enter ICILIUS.*

ICILIUS.

What dost thou here, my Fair One ?

VIRGINIA.

I go to worship in DIANA's Temple,  
 To weep, and, with religious Supplication,  
 Implore her Safeguard on this evil Day.

ICILIUS.

I must not disapprove thy pious Errand.---  
 Religion is the fairest, brightest Gem

That

That Woman wears. Unseason'd with Religion,  
 She sins against the great Design of Nature,  
 Which form'd for this her gentle Mind. Then wear it,  
 Wear the rich Jewel in thy Heart for ever :  
 But let me still conjure thee to restrain  
 Thy boundless Fears. At length the People's Rage  
 Is up in thy Behalf, and vows Revenge  
 Against the brutal Tyrant.

VIRGINIA.

O beware  
 Of idle Hopes. Your Talk should rather be  
 To steel the tender Purpose of my Soul  
 With Roman Fortitude; that in the last,  
 The worst of all Extremities, I may  
 Ev'n to my Life prefer my Virgin Honour.

ICILIUS.

A sudden Horror, like the Gloom of Death,  
 O'erwhelms my Soul. My Sum of Happiness  
 In thee so centers, that I dare not think  
 On what thy Fear suggests.

VIRGINIA.

Alas ! What Trust  
 Can I repose in Men who bear to see  
 Their Country ruin'd ? Can I hope that such  
 Will save me from the Tyrant, who themselves  
 So tamely suffer his oppressive Yoke ?---  
 Hah !--Hark !--A distant Shouting !--Hark, ICILIUS !--

ICILIUS.

It is the Clamour of the Multitude,  
 Whose Vengeance is a-foot ; and, like a Lion  
 Escap'd from his unwary Keeper, roars  
 In ev'ry Street.---All, all is safe, VIRGINIA.

VIRGINIA.

O my poor Father !

ICILIUS.

ICILIUS.

Doubt not he will come.

VIRGINIA.

Last Night methought I saw him in my Sleep ;  
 Ay me ! How chang'd in his Appearance !---Pale,  
 Grim, ghastly were his Looks.---His upcast Eyes  
 With Heav'n expostulating stood ; while Tears,  
 Fast-flowing o'er his manly Cheeks, bedew'd  
 The trembling Earth.---As for an only Child,  
 He mourn'd : for oft the visionary Father  
 Utter'd my Name, in Bitterness of Anguish.---  
 'Tis Horror inexpressible to think  
 Of what I felt. The dire Impression still  
 Shakes my whole Frame.

ICILIUS.

Fear is alone the Cause ;  
 That Things of no Significance alarm  
 Thy sick Imagination.---Cease to tremble.---  
 Believe the Danger past.

VIRGINIA.

It is not Life,  
 Nor its gay Bloom, for which I tremble thus ;  
 Tho' Nature bids me prize them dearly. No.  
 Should it so please all-ruling Providence,  
 That only Death can save me from Dishonour ;---  
 Go Life, and all my blooming Prospects vanish.  
 I will not stain, with an unseemly Tear,  
 A Victim offer'd to the Will of Heaven,  
 On Virtue's Altar.---Not a Sigh, CAMILLA,  
 No weak, no womanish Complaint shall mar  
 This truly Roman Sacrifice :---An Act,  
 Which Virtue, which the Dignity of Woman,  
 The sacred Honour of my Sex requires.---  
 While such high Motives claim my great Attention,

Away

Away with ev'ry low Regard ;---away  
 With little Self: it weighs not in the Balance ;  
 Or weighs like the vile Dust, which Reason's Breath  
 Blows lightly from the partial Scale.---To die !  
 What is it but to pay the Debt of Nature :  
 A common Debt which all, without Distinction,  
 Pay when Heav'n wills ?--I fear not Death, ICILIUS :--  
 But when I think on my lov'd Father's Grief ;  
 On that distressful Scene of mingled Woe,  
 Which his, which your's, and which CAMILLA's heart  
 Must jointly share :---I tremble at the Thought.  
 Reason commands my Tears.

ICILIUS.

The mighty Gods,  
 Who make the sacred Cause and Friends of Virtue  
 Their most peculiar Care, will save VIRGINIUS  
 From ev'ry mournful Accident. Then trust  
 In their Protection ; in the chaste DIANA's  
 Securely trust.---

VIRGINIA.

Your manly Consolation  
 Prevails at last. It wakes a sudden Hope.---  
 My Father's matchless Merit ;---his whole Life,  
 Unblemish'd with a single Act that errs  
 From Virtue's Course :---O this, if Virtue claims  
 The Favour of the Gods, on him will draw  
 Their just Protection down ; on APPIUS  
 Hot Wrath and high Rebuke.

ICILIUS.

Like the gay Sun,  
 Quick darting thro' the Clouds, which veil'd his Lustre,  
 Thy Beauty, from Distress and Horror free'd,  
 Beams forth and blazes on my Sight.---O thus,---  
 Look thus, my Fair.---That heav'nly Smile recalls

My



My banish'd Bliss ; and, rous'd by Sympathy,  
 Joy sparkles in CAMILLA's Cheek.—VALERIUS,  
 Rome's noblest Son, the Dread of the Decemvirs,  
 Moves this Way.

CAMILLA.

Come.

ICILIUS.

Myself will follow strait ;  
 Devoutly breathing Supplications.

CAMILLA.

Come.—

[*Exeunt VIRGINIA and CAMILLA.*

ICILIUS.

To such a wild Excess I doat upon her,  
 That I can hardly brook a Moment's Absence.  
 It seems a long Suspense of Being ; seems  
 A Pause in Life.---

### S C E N E III.

*Enter VALERIUS.*

VALERIUS.

Was it thy Bride, ICILIUS,  
 That parted hence, and suddenly retir'd  
 Into DIANA's Temple ?

ICILIUS.

'Twas VIRGINIA.

VALERIUS.

Her Beauty, which surpasses all Description,  
 Seems the fair Blossom of an early Youth.---  
 Has he no Shame, this utter Foe to Virtue ;  
 No Reverence of human Nature in him :---  
 That he such lovely tender Innocence  
 Would make a Victim to his brutal Lust ?

D

ICILIUS.

ICILIUS.

But shall we suffer him?

VALERIUS.

We must not ;---will not.

ICILIUS.

Let but the great VALERIUS and HORATIUS  
Appear, and give the Signal of Revolt ;---  
All, all is ready for an Insurrection.

VALERIUS.

Forbid it all the Gods that such as we  
Should, while the great majestic Cause of Country  
For Action calls ; remain at sluggish Ease,  
Deaf to the Summons.---Know, what Rome demands  
In us shall meet with no Delay.

ICILIUS.

Farewell.---

I'll hasten to conduct VIRGINIA  
To PORTIA's House. That done, my sudden Task  
Shall be to find and fire the chief Plebeians.  
Your very Names will animate their Rage,  
And cheer their Hopes.---

[Exit.

VALERIUS.

Let the Decemvir now  
Resist us, if he can. The great Occasion,  
Which we have long desir'd, is come at last.---  
It is a Woman's Cause ; an injur'd Woman's :  
The same which free'd our Fathers from the Yoke  
Of TARQUIN and of Kings.---Shall APPIUS,  
Shall a Decemvir, shall a private Man,  
For he's no more, do, with Impunity,  
What ev'n in Kings the Romans would not bear ?---  
At length, Rome, thy Deliverance is nigh.  
The Props of Tyranny begin to shake.

Soon must they fall.---HORATIUS comes.---  
He seems disturb'd.---

## S C E N E IV.

*Enter* HORATIUS.

HORATIUS.

I bring thee News, VALERIUS.  
The Legions in the Field against the Sabines  
Have made a foul disorderly Retreat;  
Quite to the Neighbourhood of Rome.

VALERIUS.

I guess

That their Retreat was quick and voluntary.

HORATIUS.

Ay, such indeed.

VALERIUS.

'Tis scarcely yet an Hour  
Since we receiv'd Advice from Algidum;  
That there the mutinous and angry Legions  
Had left their Camp and Baggage to the Foe.  
This brave, this honourable Flight, HORATIUS,  
Is such a shining and exalted Proof  
Of truly Roman Magnanimity,  
That After-Generations shall extoll it  
Above the highest Trophies of our Fathers.

HORATIUS.

Alas! The Terror of the Roman Name  
Is vilely sunk.---Our ancient Glory dwindles;  
For lo the Nations which, in former Times,  
Were us'd to tremble at our near Approach;  
Disdaining, like their Ancestors, to wage  
A timid and respectful War; advance

Ev'n to the Gates of Rome, and boldly pitch  
 Their hostile Tents under the sacred Brow  
 Of Jove, residing in the Capitol.

VALERIUS.

Hence see what different Effects arise  
 From Servitude and Freedom in a State.  
 The martial Spirit of our Countrymen  
 Is still the same :---But why should Romans fight ?

HORATIUS.

Hah ! Well observ'd. Why should they fight indeed ;  
 When not the Glory of the Commonwealth,  
 Nor Strife for high Renown impels their Swords  
 Upon the Foe ; but Infamy and Chains  
 Await the Victors.

VALERIUS.

Now that Victory  
 Would strengthen Tyrants in their Usurpation ;  
 These Tidings of Defeat are joyful Tidings.

## S C E N E V.

*Re-enter ICILIUS.*

ICILIUS.

HORATIUS, hail.--News from the Camp, VALERIUS.  
 My Brother TITUS is return'd. I found,  
 I left him in DIANA's Temple.

VALERIUS.

Say,

What News ?

ICILIUS.

He saw the Father of VIRGINIA  
 Spring from the Camp, born on a nimble Steed,  
 Which seem'd, as conscious of the Rider's Haste,  
 To rise with Pinions in his rapid Motion.

VALERIUS.



VALERIUS.

Whence comes it that the News of his Departure  
Should thus out-ride himself ?

ICILIUS.

He was advis'd  
To shun the neareſt Way, the publick Road ;  
Left Snares ſhould intercept him.

VALERIUS.

Are the Legions  
Now ripe for a Revolt ?

ICILIUS,

Their Indignation,  
Scarcely before confin'd, a ſudden Cauſe  
Inflames to Mutiny.

VALERIUS.

What Cauſe ?

ICILIUS.

A Meſſage,  
Come from the Legions in the Sabine Land,  
Where Tumult rages higher ſtill, confirms  
The firſt Report ; that SICCIUS DENTATUS,  
Rome's matchleſs Chief, her Thunderbolt in Arms,  
Surpriz'd by foul Aſſaſſination fell ;  
Not by the Foe.

VALERIUS.

Gods ! Is that certain Truth ?  
Did then the Cowards under his Command  
Reſign their Leader up to vile Aſſaſſins ?

ICILIUS.

His Party was a choſen Gang of Traitors.  
'Twas they that murder'd him.---Not unreveng'd  
Great SICCIUS fell.

VALERIUS.

Alas ! What could he do,  
Arm'd with a single Spear, against such Odds ?

ICILIUS.

He, with a single Spear, seem'd, in his Rage,  
A Match for all.---Such Wonders he perform'd,  
That simple Truth shall, like a Poet's Fiction,  
Be to the Tales of Hercules compar'd.  
Death was in ev'ry Blow. The Slain, in Heaps,  
Before him press'd the bloody Ground.---At length,  
(O Rome, blush here for thy degen'rate Sons !)  
The Dastards, from a Rock behind him, threw  
Large Fragments on his hoary Head.---Then dropp'd  
His manly Spear, the Pride of Battle ; quell'd  
By such vile Weapons, and the War of Women.---  
A Band of Soldiers, urg'd by strong Suspicions,  
Which Rumour favour'd, hy'd them to the Place  
Where their great Champion lay.--Fall'n on his Shield!  
His Helmet off ; and his unsightly Wounds  
Bare to the Eye !---No Vestige of a Sabine !---  
No Roman stript !---Shameless, without a Mask,  
Pale Murder had usurp'd the Field of War.---  
Strait they return'd ; in Funeral Procession,  
Bearing his lifeless Body on their Shields.---

HORATIUS.

Were not the base Assassins seiz'd and slain ?--  
Were they not hew'd in Pieces by the Legions ?

ICILIUS.

Their sudden, strange, and wonderful Escape  
Has turn'd to Certainty Suspicion's Guess  
About the sole Contriver.

HORATIUS.

HORATIUS.

SICCIUS,

Thy Zeal for Liberty, thy noble Zeal  
Has been the Cause of this.

VALERIUS.

The Curse of Tyrants,

The Sum and Essence of their Misery  
Lies here :---Worth is their necessary Foe ;  
And they the mortal Foes of Worth.

HORATIUS.

Why loiter

The Legions in the Field ? Why not return  
To Rome at once, and execute their Vengeance ?

ICILIUS.

Nought but the military Oath restrains them.  
They fear it would offend the Gods.

HORATIUS.

What Oath

Can bind a Roman Citizen or Soldier  
To serve the lawless Tyrants of his Country ?  
It is a vain and idle Superstition.

ICILIUS.

Of that the Legions will be soon convinc'd.

VALERIUS.

Then now the Dawn of Liberty begins.  
There is a general Conspiracy  
Against the Yoke of the Decemvirs.

HORATIUS.

Gods !

Why should the Gloom of Tyranny be lengthen'd  
An Hour beyond its Time ? Let us appear,  
And give the Signal strait, VALERIUS.

VALERIUS.

Not 'till the Father of VIRGINIA comes.  
His Presence and his Cause will kindle Rage ;

And bid Commotion, like an angry Flood,  
 Wildly surmounting Obstacles, o'erwhelm  
 This Guilt of Pow'r ; that infamous Tribunal  
 Where, in Contempt of Heav'n and human Vengeance,  
 Oppression laughs ; where sportful Tyranny,  
 Mad with Success, hatches lewd Violation  
 Under the Name of Law. -- We'll meet you there ;  
 Prone, as Occasion shall direct, ICILIUS,  
 To guide or mingle in the Storm. --- Farewell. [*Exeunt.*]



A C T





## A C T IV. S C E N E I.

*Scene the House of NUMITORIUS.*

ICILIUS.

**T**WO rival Passions in my Bosom burn :  
 For Rome the first.---This early from my Child-  
 hood,  
 Shot deep its Sparks into my Nature.---This  
 Reigns, as a Queen ; justly supreme o'er all.---  
 The second is a fierce and gen'rous Flame,  
 Which Beauty kindled ; which Esteem increases,  
 And Hope now feeds with Extasy.---She comes.---

## S C E N E II.

*Enter VIRGINIA.*

ICILIUS.

O fairest among Women, wise and good,  
 Not less than fair, my blest Imagination  
 Was full of thee ; was full of sweet Desires ;  
 Of joyful Expectations full. Thy Father.---

VIRGINIA.

Return'd, ICILIUS.

ICILIUS.

Ev'ry Moment now  
 Bids us expect thy Father's wish'd Arrival.

VIRGINIA.

O much he tarries !---Since your Brother TITUS  
 Assur'd us of his near Approach, in vain,

A tedious

A tedious Hour is fully wasted.——Hah!---  
What if the Tyrant's Emissaries——

ICILIUS.

Fear not.

Warn'd of the Risk, he tempers Speed with Caution,  
Choosing the safest, not the nearest Way.

VIRGINIA.

Would he were come: I should be then at Ease.

ICILIUS.

I feel a Joy too powerful for Expression,  
When I but think how fast my Bliss approaches.  
Has he not promis'd that his first Return  
Shall crown my Wish, and make thee mine for ever?

VIRGINIA.

He little thought, ICILIUS, going hence,  
That, while the Sword of War was yet unsheath'd,  
He should become a Debtor to his Promise.

ICILIUS.

For that am I beholden to the Tyrant; ——  
Whose vain Attempt is but a Spur to Time,  
Hast'ning the nuptial Hour.—Prepare, my Love,  
To bind thy Temples with the holy Chaplet,  
And let the Veil be ready to put on.  
My bridal Bed, impatient to receive thee,  
Assumes its Ornaments: The God of Marriage  
Comes, with his Torches flaming in his Hand.  
At length the dear, the long-expected Day——

VIRGINIA.

Why,—why such wond'rous Haste, ICILIUS?  
Have I not oft advis'd you to reflect  
Upon my young and unexperienc'd Age?  
Nor think it maiden Bashfulness, the Speech  
Of a coy Virgin, utter'd to disguise  
Her glowing Heart:---Far less believe it Coldness.---

That

That I should listen to your ardent Vows,  
My Father will'd. How much my secret Soul  
Approv'd his Choice!——No more your Friend,

CAMILLA,

Needs to your anxious Ear disclose in Whispers:---  
Have not my Words confirm'd it?——After that,  
Beware of idle Doubts and Jealousy ;  
They justly would offend.——Your Love sincere  
I duely prize :—But, taught by your Example,  
By your Discourse admonish'd, I would gain,  
As the sole Pledge of durable Affection,  
Gain and preserve your rational Esteem.——  
For this great Purpose, yet a little longer  
Leave,—to CAMILLA's wife Instruction leave me.

ICILIUS.

Were Heav'n's high Model in a Lover's Power,  
I would not wish thee, Fair One, otherwise  
Than as thou art ; so perfect do'st thou seem  
In Beauty, Wisdom, and in ev'ry Gift  
Which Nature's utmost Prodigality  
Can lavish on the Sex.

VIRGINIA.

Dazzled by Love,  
You view me with a partial Eye.

ICILIUS.

No more.—

Why wilt thou dally with my fond Affection?

VIRGINIA.

In Life's great School a necessary Novice—

ICILIUS.

Thou hast no need of that slow Tutor, Time.  
So well has Nature taught thee, that old Age  
Might come and listen to thy wiser Youth :  
Then do not marvel if my boundless Passion,

High-

High-fed with Hope, now spurns at all Restraint :---  
 Like a young Steed, rous'd by the Voice of War,  
 The Trumpet's silver Voice ; sick of Delay,  
 He, with impatient Fierceness, paws the Ground,  
 And pants for Tumult, for the Rage of Battle.---  
 To-day ;—this very Day, VIRGINIA——  
 O have I thy Consent ?—Indeed thou must ;—  
 Nay, nay ;—thou wilt consent.

VIRGINIA.

Well then, to-day,—  
 Should you but win my Father's Approbation,—  
 Believe me not averse.—

ICILIUS.

Thy Father comes.—

### S C E N E III.

*Enter VIRGINIUS.*

All hail, VIRGINIUS ! hail !

VIRGINIUS.

My Child ! My Child !

VIRGINIA.

The Gods have heard my Pray'r. O welcome !  
 welcome !

VIRGINIUS.

Come to my Bosom : Let me hold thee fast.  
 Who, who shall tear thee from a Father's Bosom ?

VIRGINIA.

The Danger now is past : My Fears are vanish'd.

VIRGINIUS.

Perdition on the Tyrant ! Could he think,  
 Gods ! did the Monster hope that, while I liv'd,  
 His Lust should triumph o'er thy sacred Honour ;  
 And drag thee, like a Prostitute, a Slave,



To his adult'rous Bed?—O thou vile APPIUS,  
Thy rash presumptuous Hope shall cost thee dear.

ICILIUS.

The Ruin of the whole Decemvirate  
Can barely satisfy my Thirst of Vengeance :  
We'll give a Loose to Rage.

VIRGINIUS.

Weak Birds and Beasts,  
If they but see their little ones in Danger,  
Forget their Fear ; and, urg'd by stronger Instinct,  
Resist the Foe. Shall then a Soldier's Child  
Be ravish'd from him with Impunity ?  
O, by the Gods, I hunger for Revenge,  
I thirst for Blood ;---the Blood of APPIUS.

VIRGINIA.

By the much-honour'd Manes of my Mother,  
Let me beseech you to compose yourself.

VIRGINIUS.

There hast thou wak'd a Passion in my Breast,  
Which, were I calm as Death on this Occasion,  
Would kindle and arouse my sleepy Rage.  
Did'st thou not name thy Mother ? Witness Heav'n,  
I lov'd her much ; beyond Expression lov'd her.

VIRGINIA.

Granting my fond Request, oft has CAMILLA  
Recounted all the Wonders of your Love ;  
While fast the tender and infectious Tear  
Stole from our Eyes.

VIRGINIUS.

How greatly was I blest !  
I will indulge the dear, the sad Remembrance.  
The Gods, in framing NUMITORIA,  
Were surely lavish of their Skill ; and made her  
Such as our fond Imagination pictures

The

The fair immortal Deities of Heaven :  
O she was all Perfection.

VIRGINIA.

Doubtless she  
Beheld you with an equal Share of Fondness.

VIRGINIUS.

Nay, there was something more than Love between us :  
It was a Flame, an Extasy of Friendship ;  
Akin to the delightful Intercourse  
Of Heroes in the Fields of Bliss.---Too soon,  
Alas ! too soon the happy Scene was o'er.  
Heav'n snatch'd her from me, while the Prime of Youth  
Retain'd its highest Lustre on her Cheek.  
But rest assur'd of this, VIRGINIA,  
So long as I have Memory, no Time  
Shall ever raze her Image from my Heart.

VIRGINIA.

But why such endless Sorrow ? Will the Gods,  
Mov'd by your Tears, restore her to the Light ?  
Could Tears recall my Mother from the Dead,  
My filial Eyes should never cease from weeping,  
'Till they had charm'd her back.

VIRGINIUS.

The Hand of Heaven,  
Which from the Husband took his dearer Half,  
Yet did not leave the Father comfortless.---  
It left a Child, an only Child, ICILIUS,  
This young but perfect Image of her Mother ;  
Whom NUMITORIA, with her dying Breath,  
Committed to my Charge ; beseeching me  
To do the Office of a double Parent.---  
Hah ! Shall the Child of NUMITORIA,  
The Fruit, the Pledge, the Relick of her Love,  
Be made a Prey to the Decemvir's Lust ?---

Made a vile Concubine ?---O this would beggar  
All my fair Hopes at once.---The very Thought  
Distracts my Brain, and rouzes me to Madnes.

VIRGINIA.

I tremble to behold you thus, my Father.

VIRGINIUS.

I've been to blame :---But how can I reflect,  
How bear to think what Pain, what Agonies  
Thou must have felt, when the lascivious Judge  
Doom'd thee to Servitude ?---Then didst thou weep,  
And vainly call upon thy distant Father :  
Thy Father heard thee not ; but Heav'n, my Child,  
Heav'n did not leave me destitute of Friends.

VIRGINIA.

Vain would have been all other Hopes of Safety,  
Had not ICILIUS come.

VIRGINIUS.

What Recompence,  
What Thanks, ICILIUS, shall a Father give  
To him who sav'd his Child ?

ICILIUS.

I merit none.

If such an Action, void of ev'ry View  
But Virtue's Motive, is in very Deed  
Its own Reward, and fills the Heart with Joy,  
How blest the Doer, when inspir'd by Love ?  
There is, in Truth, a Boon which I would ask.

VIRGINIUS.

O freely speak : What is it you desire ?

ICILIUS.

A Lover's Recompence, a Bridegroom's Portion :  
Let me not languish out another Day  
In painful Solitude and barren Wishes.——

VIRGINIUS.

VIRGINIUS.

It shall be so.—What says VIRGINIA?

VIRGINIA.

My Will, in ev'ry thing which you require,  
But most in what may please ICILIUS,  
Shall be the close Companion of my Duty.

VIRGINIUS.

Come near, ICILIUS; from a Father's Hand  
Take, take her to thy Bosom.

ICILIUS.

On my Knees

Let me receive the precious Gift.—

VIRGINIUS.

CAMILLA! —

My Thoughts have been so busy with my Child,  
That ev'n of her I did not think 'till now:—  
Say, where is she?

VIRGINIA.

Impatient for your coming,

CAMILLA flew to watch it near the Gate  
Which opens towards Algidum.

ICILIUS.

Behold her,

Haste in her Step, and Transport in her Looks.---

## S C E N E VI.

*Enter CAMILLA.*

CAMILLA.

'Tis he, 'tis he.—Welcome! O greatly welcome!  
Much did I fear some horrible Mischance  
With-held you from us in our greatest Need:---  
But Heav'n is merciful.---O welcome! welcome!--  
Now, my VIRGINIA, let your Mind have Rest.

VIRGINIUS.



VIRGINIUS.

Tell me, CAMILLA, how shall I requite  
 Thy wonderful Integrity, which soar'd  
 Above the Tyrant's Reach?---Now, by my Life,  
 I will not prove ungrateful to thy Virtue.  
 As thou hast been a Mother to my Child,  
 So henceforth be the Sister of VIRGINIUS,  
 My Sister by Adoption; dear alike  
 As if by Nature thou wert truly such.

CAMILLA.

How shall I render Thanks?

VIRGINIUS.

Nay, thank me not.

Why shouldst thou thank me for an Act of Justice,  
 Due to thy Merit long ago?

CAMILLA.

The Favour—

VIRGINIUS.

The Favour that I do, is to myself.

VIRGINIA.

It is to me, CAMILLA.

ICILIUS.

To us all.

Let me not seem unmindful of my Promise:  
 For, as the Mother of VIRGINIA,  
 Shalt thou have Honour at my House To-night.—  
 Rejoice; it is my bridal Night, CAMILLA.

CAMILLA.

Hah! do we sport with angry Providence?  
 Is this a Time to talk of bridal Joys,  
 While the Decemvir, while the Scourge of Heaven  
 Hangs o'er our Heads?

VIRGINIUS.

Nay, she advises well.

Be rul'd, ICILIUS ; let it be To-morrow.

ICILIUS.

No Time so proper as this very Night :  
 Since, if the Tyrant shall be disappointed,  
 As sure he must, in his audacious Scheme,  
 It will complete my Victory, when he  
 Beholds the fair VIRGINIA led, in Triumph,  
 From his Tribunal to the bridal Bed.——

## S C E N E IV.

*Enter* NUMITORIUS.

NUMITORIUS.

VIRGINIUS, hail ! Haste and prepare to meet  
 The Tyrant in the Forum. All his Friends  
 Are now conven'd in Readiness, and swarm  
 Before the Palace-gate.

CAMILLA.

Hah !

VIRGINIUS.

Let them come.—

What Cause have I to fear the Tyrant's Friends?  
 Is not the Roman People on my Side ?

NUMITORIUS.

Still there is Cause ; nay, wond'rous Cause to fear:

CAMILLA.

Immortal JOVE !—Fresh Cause to fear !—Already  
 Too dreadful was the Risk.—O say, what Cause !

VIRGINIA.

Seek not to know. My Father's awful Presence  
 From the dire Risk of foul Dishonour saves me.  
 That Risk was solely to be fear'd. All else,  
 Leave to the great and gracious Gods, CAMILLA.

CAMILLA.

Ay me !

VIRGINIUS.

VIRGINIUS.

Conduct them home, ICILIUS :

I'll follow strait. [*Ex. ICILIUS, VIRGINIA, CAMILLA.*]

Now say ; what Cause, my Brother ?

NUMITORIUS.

I hear the Soldiers of the Capitol

Are order'd down.

VIRGINIUS.

Hah !—Soldiers, do'st thou say ?

I like not that.

NUMITORIUS.

Prepare, VIRGINIUS.

VIRGINIUS.

What must I do ?

NUMITORIUS.

Go forthwith to your House.

Assemble all your Kindred and Relations ;

Then, hasting to the Forum, try to kindle

The People's utmost Wrath.

VIRGINIUS.

It shall be done.—

Why, NUMITORIUS, why should I despair ?

Rome and its Gods will sure protect my Child.—

Should this great Expectation fail,—dire Thought !—

Then Rage shall rise in her Defence. Distraction,

Necessity must do the Work.—This Hand,—

Should all else fail, should Gods and Men forsake me,—

This Hand shall save her from the Tyrant's Lust.---



## A C T V. S C E N E I.

*Scene the Forum.*

SICINIUS, DUELLIUS, POMPONIUS, and Plebeians.

SICINIUS.

A Scene of such outrageous Insolence  
In Rome before was never acted ; no,  
Not by the TARQUINS.

DUELLIUS.

Should this vile Attempt  
Of APPIUS succeed, farewell for ever  
Domestick sweet Security ;——farewel  
The Bliss of Wedlock, and the Peace of Parents :--  
Since, deem'd a Victim, what plebeian Beauty  
Could afterwards escape those young Patricians,  
Who wantonly, beneath the Wing of Power,  
Hatch their lewd Schemes ?

POMPONIUS.

What infamous Disorders  
Has not already that licentious Band  
Committed with Impunity ? What House  
Feels not, or dreads the worst of Violations ?

DUELLIUS.

When I forget the base opprobrious Stripes,  
Which sportful Tyrants have inflicted here  
On such as, fir'd by these atrocious Wrongs,  
Accus'd the bold Offenders,—let me feel  
The Scourge myself ; and may the Shame I suffer

Serve



Serve only for a Spectacle of Mirth  
To the Beholders.

SICINIUS.

In VIRGINIA's Cause  
(It is the Cause of human Nature, Romans)  
Shall we not rouse, and boldly vindicate  
A Father's and a Freeman's sacred Rights?

*Omnes.* We will.

SICINIUS.

The Rights of an ICILIUS?

*Omnes.* We will, we will.

POMPONIUS.

See where the Father comes.

## • S C E N E II.

*Enter VIRGINIUS, ICILIUS, NUMITORIUS, VIRG.-  
NIA, CAMILLA, &c.*

VIRGINIUS.

To you, my Friends and Fellow Citizens,  
A Soldier calls for Aid; calls for Protection;  
For Vengeance calls.—These, as a Suppliant,  
With Tears he begs:--Nor only begs them from you,  
He likewise claims them, as a Soldier's Due,  
Who daily for your Children and your Wives  
Unsheaths his Sword.

NUMITORIUS.

Rome's wide Circumference  
Holds not a braver Soldier than VIRGINIUS.

VIRGINIUS.

But what avails our Courage in the Field,  
Our Feats of War, our Labours for our Country,  
If a domestick Foe, while Rome is safe,  
Shall range at Will, as in a conquer'd City;  
Taking our Children Captives in the Street,

And loading them with worse Indignities  
Than hostile Sabines would inflict ?

ICILIUS.

My Speech

Is to the Brave and Young ; to such as feel,  
Or ever felt the gen'rous Charm of Love.——  
Behold my Bride, the Portion of my Heart :  
As ye prize Women and the Cause of Virtue,  
Defend her from the Tyrant's lewd Attack ;  
From beastly Violation.

CAMILLA.

Hear me, Romans.——

Were I to tell you what CAMILLA suffer'd,  
When I beheld the Child of all my Cares  
Seiz'd by the Tyrant's brutal Emiffary,  
I know that you would pity me :---You'd say,  
What could a real Parent suffer more ?——  
Will the Decemvir come a second Time ?---  
A second Time, ye mighty Romans, save her.

NUMITORIUS.

See, see that melancholy Train of Mourners ;  
Whose streaming Eyes, with tongueless Rhetorick,  
Plead for Assistance to the Gods and you,

VIRGINIUS.

I plead not for myself alone ; but you :  
'Tis for your Wives, your Daughters, and your Sisters ;  
For the whole Sex in general I plead :---  
I plead for Babes, for Children yet unborn,---  
Should this vile Plot, this Scheme of Violation,  
Meet with Success ;---would it not serve, ye Romans,  
As an Example left upon Record,  
To fire the Lust of ev'ry future APPIUS ?

NUMITORIUS.

Hark ! hark ! he comes.

VIRGINIUS.

VIRGINIUS.

Now, Fellow Citizens!

ICILIUS.

Now, Friends!-----

S C E N E III.

*Enter APPIUS, MARCUS CLAUDIUS, and Liſtors, with armed Men at a Diſtance.*

APPIUS.

FLAMINIUS, bid the Soldiers ſtand ;---  
And ſee that they, ſhould Need require, be ready  
To quench the Firebrands of Sedition.---Liſtors,  
Make room for MARCUS CLAUDIUS to proceed  
In his Demand.---

MARCUS CLAUDIUS.

Have I not Reason, APPIUS,  
To think your late Delay of Juſtice wrong'd me?--  
With all Reſpect and Deference I ſpeak ;  
But Truth emboldens me to tell you this.  
It was too great, too meek a Condeſcenſion,  
To let the Faction of ICILIUS  
Obtain from you, by Turbulence and Strife,  
A Thing which Juſtice and the Law refus'd them.

ICILIUS.

O Villain ! Monſter, void of all Religion,  
Cease to profane the ſacred Name of Juſtice.

APPIUS.

Proceed, proceed.

MARCUS CLAUDIUS.

I claim'd VIRGINIA,  
As being Daughter to a Slave of mine :  
That ſhe is truly ſuch, let DORA witneſs.

APPIUS.

Where is ſhe ? Speak.

MARCUS

MARCUS CLAUDIUS.

Behold her, APPIUS ;

Herself by Birth a Slave, and consequently  
The Mother of a Bondmaid.

VIRGINIUS.

Base-born Villain !

If DORA be the Mother of VIRGINIA,  
What then was NUMITORIA ?---Villain, tell me,  
How could I be deceiv'd so grossly ?

MARCUS CLAUDIUS.

Thus,

Her Mother fold her, while a new-born Infant.---

VIRGINIUS.

To whom ?

MARCUS CLAUDIUS.

To barren NUMITORIA.

VIRGINIUS.

Gods, grant me Patience.---Shall I suffer this ?  
Shall I not tear that foul licentious Tongue,  
Shall I not tear it from thee by the Root,  
Thou vile Defamer ?---But, alas ! my Friends,  
Why should I waste my Anger on a Wretch  
So far below the Dignity of Vengeance ?---  
I know for whom my Vengeance is reserv'd.

MARCUS CLAUDIUS.

This Rage becomes you not.---

Think where you stand :---In the Decemvir's Presence.

APPIUS.

Nay, let him madly bluster, if he will.  
Proceed.

MARCUS CLAUDIUS.

DORA will suddenly convince him,

APPIUS.

Say, Slave ; art thou the Mother of VIRGINIA ?

DORA.



DORA.

All that I formerly confess'd, and all  
That MARCUS CLAUDIUS has affirm'd, is Truth.

VIRGINIUS.

O matchless Impudence !

APPIUS.

For solid Reasons  
Much DORA's Testimony weighs with me.

VIRGINIUS.

What ! Shall the Testimony of a Slave,  
Of a vile Slave, instructed by her Master,  
Be reckon'd here, in this important Cause,  
Where Freedom is concern'd, a legal Proof ?  
Shall it be reckon'd Proof sufficient ?

APPIUS.

Peace.---

Myself am here an Evidence for you ;---  
An Evidence above Exception, CLAUDIUS :  
Then bid the Slave retire.

ICILIUS.

O all ye Gods !

Both Judge and Evidence !

VIRGINIUS.

Amazing !

APPIUS.

Peace.---

Your Father, as my Client, while he liv'd,  
Would often tell me, MARCUS CLAUDIUS,  
How DORA, prompted by the Thirst of Gain,  
Had sold her Infant to a Freeman's Wife.

VIRGINIUS.

If so :---Why forthwith did he not reclaim  
His alienated Right ?

APPIUS.

Still other Cares,

I know not how, preventing him, he dy'd.---

When

When afterwards his Son, whose faithful Zeal  
 Had won my Favour from our earliest Youth,  
 Begun to mention DORA's Crime; resolv'd,  
 At once, to know the Grounds of this Pretension,  
 I found, by strict Enquiry, that the Slave,  
 In very Deed, was guilty. She herself,  
 And others that were privy to the Cheat,  
 Freeman as well as Slaves, confess'd it all.

VIRGINIUS:

One Question more; (I will not curse thee yet,  
 Altho' my Reason's gone)---what hinder'd thee  
 From doing Justice to thy Client?---Say,  
 Why did his Wrong sleep unredress'd 'till now?

APPIUS.

Domestic Broils, the Function of Decemvir,  
 And Cares of State; these were in Truth the Cause:  
 But now my Client comes himself, VIRGINIUS,  
 To claim his well-attested Right; shall I,  
 Shall the chief Maker of the Law refuse  
 A Justice which the Law requires?

VIRGINIUS.

Law!---Justice!

APPIUS.

Thus therefore I decree; that MARCUS CLAUDIUS  
 Have henceforth free Possession of his Slave.

VIRGINIUS.

The Mask is taken off; and Tyranny  
 Has bar'd its shameless Front.---Now, now we see  
 The Plot unravel'd. None but APPIUS.---

APPIUS.

I will not hear thee talk.

VIRGINIUS.

Not hear me, Tyrant!

I'll speak so loud, that Heav'n, and Earth, and Hell  
 Shall

Shall hear my Voice. It is a Father's Voice ;  
 A Father pleading for an only Child.  
 Should you despise it, Romans ; 'twould ascend,  
 And wake the sleepy Thunderbolt.

APPIUS. (*Aside to* MARCUS CLAUDIUS.)

Dispatch ;

For I must cut him short.--Peace, Madman, Peace.--  
 Go ; fly to seize her, MARCUS CLAUDIUS.

VIRGINIUS.

Villain, retire ; or thus,---without a Weapon,  
 I'll tear thee piece-meal in my Fury.---Hence.---  
 I gave my Daughter to ICILIUS ;  
 And not to thee, Decemvir.---  
 I train'd her up for chaste and holy Marriage ;  
 Not for the Bed of foul Adultery.---  
 What do you then propose, that Men and Women  
 Should live like Beasts, in a promiscuous Fashion ?---  
 Whether my Fellow-Citizens in Rome  
 Will bear such Things, I know not, APPIUS :---  
 But this I know ; the Legions never will.

DUELLIUS.

Hah ! bear it, did he say ?---We will not bear it.

ICILIUS.

It is not now a Time for Words, but Action.

APPIUS.

I was no Stranger, Romans, to the Plot  
 Which turbulent ICILIUS had fram'd  
 To kindle up a civil Strife in Rome :  
 Nor only from his late seditious Brawl,  
 The boist'rous Conduct of VIRGINIUS,  
 And what yourselves have seen :---I likewise know,  
 From sure Intelligence, that Faction holds  
 Cabals in ev'ry Street of Rome To-day.---  
 Appriz'd of this, not unprepar'd I come  
 To meet the Tumult.---Bring the Soldiers on.

These factious Leaders of the noisy Rabble  
Shall find it is not always safe to spurn  
Against the Majesty of Government.---

SICINIUS.

Unarm'd, what can we do ?

APPIUS.

Quick drive them hence.

DUELLIUS.

Alas VIRGINIA !

POMPONIUS.

May the Gods protect her.---

VIRGINIUS.

Perdition, will they leave me thus !

ICILIUS.

SICINIUS,---

DUELLIUS, stay---POMPONIUS.---

NUMITORIUS.

Follow them,

And bring them back, ICILIUS.

ICILIUS.

Your's the Task

To find and bring VALERIUS and HORATIUS ;  
Them most the Tyrant fears.

[*Exeunt ICILIUS and NUMITORIUS.*

CAMILLA.

If thou hast Children ;

By their sweet Lives, by what a Father feels,  
By what he fondly wishes, be conjur'd  
To spare my Child.---Alas ! thou frown'st upon me.  
Thy Looks, Decemvir, stern as thy Decree,  
Have not a Grain of mild Compassion in them.---  
Perhaps, less void of Pity and Remorse,  
Thou, MARCUS CLAUDIUS, may'st be work'd upon.  
Should it be Gold thou thirstest for :---O speak ;  
What Ransom will suffice ?---Thou shak'st thy Head,



In Token of Refusal.---Hear me, Gods ;  
And save VIRGINIA from these cruel Men.

VIRGINIUS.

So guarded as he is ; I cannot reach him.---  
Attempt and fail !-----'Twould serve the Tyrant's  
Purpose.---

How then ?---It must be so.---No Way but that  
To save my Child from Infamy. [*Aside.*]---Decemvir,  
What I have said in Bitterness of Rage,  
A Father's Anguish must excuse. Allow me,  
Before I lose a Child, so dearly lov'd,  
A Moment's Conversation with herself,  
And with her Friend CAMILLA. Fully skill'd  
In ev'ry Secret of my House, she best  
Can solve my rising Doubts. Then, if in Truth  
The Name of Father has been put upon me,  
I shall, with less intolerable Grief,  
Rejoin my Fellow-Soldiers in the Camp.

APPIUS.

We grant you Leave.---FLAMINIUS, MARCUS  
CLAUDIUS,

There is in private what I would impart  
To you.---

[VIRGINIUS leads VIRGINIA to a Corner of  
the Stage ; CAMILLA follows.]

VIRGINIUS.

Nay, do not weep, VIRGINIA.

Thy Tears distract a Father's Soul :---But Heaven  
Refuses to be satisfy'd with Tears.

VIRGINIA.

Is there ought else which Heav'n requires ?

VIRGINIUS.

There is.---

How shall I mention it ? [*Aside.*]

VIRGINIA.

VIRGINIA.

Whate'er it be ;

You shall not find me backward to perform  
What you, what Honour, and what Heav'n advises.

VIRGINIUS.

I see she guesses and approves my Meaning. [Aside.  
Art thou persuaded that I love thee much ?

VIRGINIA.

Alas ! I fear too much ; too tenderly.

VIRGINIUS.

O that my Life could save thee from Dishonour.  
I'd freely give it.---Dost thou credit this ?

VIRGINIA.

Your Tears are Witnesses:

VIRGINIUS.

Hah ! do I weep ?

By Heav'n I knew it not. The Pangs of Nature  
Will needs have Way : But Tears and Words are short  
Of what I feel.---Retire, CAMILLA ;---leave us.

CAMILLA.

Ay me ! what dreadful Thing have you to say,  
Which poor CAMILLA must not hear ?---My Child !  
I tremble for my Child.---

VIRGINIUS.

Nay, do not stay to reason with me.---Go ;  
I prithee, go.

VIRGINIA.

Fear not, too fond CAMILLA.

Why should'st thou fear to leave me with my Father ?

CAMILLA.

Some fatal Resolution works within him.

O let me fly to find ICILIUS.--- [Exit.

VIRGINIUS.

There is but one Way left, VIRGINIA,  
To rescue thee from Shame.

VIRGINIA?

VIRGINIA.

Heav'n points it to me.

VIRGINIUS.

No Choice but Death, or imminent Dishonour.

VIRGINIA.

Can there be Room for Hesitation here ?

Not for myself I feel. I feel for you ;

For lov'd ICILIUS, and for lov'd CAMILLA.

VIRGINIUS.

Let Madness take Possession of my Brain ;

And I will thank the Gods : for Reason now,

The best and choicest Gift of Nature ;---Reason

To me would henceforth only prove a Curse.---

APPIUS.

Look, MARCUS CLAUDIUS :---Dost thou not perceive

His wild and frantic Gestures ?---By the Gods

There's Evil in his Thoughts. Observe him.

VIRGINIA.

Haste :

The Tyrant's Minister.---

VIRGINIUS.

I must be quick.---

Since nought but this, O my lov'd only Child,

Can save thee from Pollution,---thus I free thee ---

[Stabs her.]

APPIUS, [*starting up.*]

The solid Earth shakes under me ! 'Twill burst.

It needs must swallow me without Delay.---

O matchless Horror !--- [*Falls back on his Tribunal.*]

VIRGINIA.

From a Father's Hand

Welcome eternal Freedom ; welcome Death,

Which saves me from Dishonour.---Best of Fathers,--

Death presses on me fast.--Farewel !---and now---

Farewel !

Farewel!--Oh! my belov'd--(to speak thy Name  
Is the last Office of my Tongue)--ICILIUS. [*Dies.*

VIRGINIUS.

Decemvir, see to what Extremity  
Thou hast reduc'd a miserable Father.---  
Look, Tyrant, look, and tremble at the Sight:  
For, with this innocent and precious Blood,  
Thee to the Furies and infernal Gods  
I here devote.

APPIUS.

Seize, seize him, Lictors!--Seize him.

VIRGINIUS.

Retire, ye Slaves; nor madly rush upon  
This Instrument of Vengeance in my Hand:  
Made rich and crimson'd in the purple Stream  
Ev'n of my Daughter's Life; let me not stain it.---  
Why stain it, Caitiffs, in the vulgar Fate  
Of such as you?---For thee, pernicious Tyrant,  
This hallow'd Dagger, this devoted Weapon  
Will I reserve: Nor shall these bloody Fingers  
Ungrasp their eager Hold, 'till Heav'n's high Wrath,  
For this inhuman, this atrocious Deed,  
Has had full Scope.---Seize me not yet, Distraction;--  
Sweet Reason, stay;--Tears, cease to flow;--be still,  
O Grief, 'till great Revenge has done its Work:  
Then Madness shall be welcome. [*Exit.*

APPIUS.

Lictors---Soldiers.--

They stir not. Horror has unmann'd them.---Hah!  
What mean those dreadful Shouts?---ICILIUS,  
With all the People at his Heels!--Confusion!  
Inevitable Ruin waits.---I come;  
Justice, I come: But no plebeian Hand  
Shall plant a Dagger here. Since I must die,  
I will, as it becomes me, fall. [*Aside.*] Haste,

CLAUDIUS,

See



See that the Body be remov'd.---FLAMINIUS,  
Lest these arm'd Cowards, in their Fear, revolt,  
And join the raging Populace, retire :

Hence to the Capitol.---O Villains! Traytors!---

ICILIUS. [ *Behind the Scenes.*

Hah! MARCUS CLAUDIUS !

MARCUS CLAUDIUS.

Spare my Life, VIRGINIUS.

VIRGINIUS.

I did not think of thee ; so much had APPIUS  
Engag'd my whole Revenge.

MARCUS CLAUDIUS.

Let me be banish'd.

VIRGINIUS.

Hence, hence ; I care not what becomes of thee.

ICILIUS.

Nought shall protect him from my Rage. Die, Villain,--  
Die worthless Wretch.---Now to the Tyrant's Palace.--

[ *Shouts.*

## S C E N E IV.

*Scene the Palace of APPIUS.*

*Enter APPIUS.*

'Tis done.---I've swallow'd Death's avenging Potion :  
And yet I cannot get her from my Thoughts.

Her mangled Image rises to my View,

Where'er I go.---Plainly my troubled Fancy

Now sees the dreadful Act repeated ; sees

The Weapon lifed in his Hand.---Earth, Heav'n,

Are struck with Horror.--Hold, VIRGINIUS ;

Nature will sicken at the Wound.---She falls ;

And now the vengeful Dagger points at me.---

Who, who would bear such Agony ?---'Tis well ;

The Poison has begun to work at length.---

A mortal Chillness seizes me all o'er.

Now Life forsakes me fast.---On the bare Earth

Fall prostrate, APPIUS.---With thy native Dust  
 Hasten, wretched Man to mingle.---What is Life?---  
 The better Part of APPIUS CLAUDIUS  
 Dy'd long ago : for, when my Virtue dy'd,  
 I truly ceas'd to live. [*Shouts.*] VIRGINIUS !  
 ICILIUS too !---Why dost thou linger, Poison?---  
 O for a Dagger to dispatch me.---Burst  
 Earth to thy Center ; hide me from the Face  
 Of injur'd Men.---

## S C E N E V.

*Enter VIRGINIUS, ICILIUS, and the Plebeian Chiefs.*

ICILIUS.

Where, where is APPIUS ?

I will not rest till I have slain the Tyrant.

This Hand shall do me Justice.

VIRGINIUS.

Hold, ICILIUS.

That Task I wholly claim. A Father's Hand  
 Must execute the Wrath of Heaven.---Rise, APPIUS.

ICILIUS.

Rise, Man of Blood. The fatal Hour is come  
 For Vengeance ; rise.

APPIUS.

I am beyond your Reach.

The fatal Work is done ;---not meanly left  
 To low Plebeians.---Furies!--Horror!--Hell!  
 I'm tortur'd!--rack'd!--

VIRGINIUS.

Death's dreadful Agonies  
 War with his feeble Frame.

APPIUS.

The Sin of Blood,  
 More heavy than the iron Hand of Death,  
 Sits on my Soul.---Would but my Being end  
 With this vain Life ;---then it were well ;---but---oh !  
 Have Mercy, Heav'n.---

VIRGINIUS.

VIRGINIUS.

This Anguish and Remorse,  
Much injur'd as I am, affect me.

APPIUS.

Mercy !----

VIRGINIUS.

Here ends the Course of my Revenge.

APPIUS.

It comes---

My Dissolution---comes,---VIRGINIUS,

I feel---the mortal Poison---at my Heart.--- [Dies.

ICILIUS.

To see the Tyrant thus, was all I ask'd ;---

Where is the Weapon which destroy'd VIRGINIA ?--

It shall not linger in my Hand.

VIRGINIUS.

Forbear ;

Rash Man, forbear to trespass on thy Life.

ICILIUS.

Rome's greatest Citizens---

VIRGINIUS.

Have err'd in that.---

True Fortitude, my Son, consists in bearing

The Lot of our Adversities, like Men ;

Like Creatures subject to the Will of Heaven.

## S C E N E VI.

*Enter VALERIUS, HORATIUS, and NUMITORIUS.*

HORATIUS.

We come too late. The Tyrant is no more.

VALERIUS.

He should have been reserv'd for Public Justice.

Say ; wherefore have you kill'd him privately ?

VIRGINIUS.

It was indeed our Purpose to have kill'd him :---

But he, by Poison, had prevented us.

HORATIUS.

Nay, then 'tis well.

VALERIUS.

To you, VIRGINIUS,

The Roman Senate and the People owe  
This mighty Revolution:---But, alas!  
How shall we comfort an unhappy Father?

VIRGINIUS.

Yes, as a Father, I must ever mourn:---  
But, as a Roman, I rejoice, VALERIUS,  
In this;---that it has pleas'd the Gods to make  
My private Loss, my Grief, and my Revenge,  
The Cause of public Benefit to Rome.---  
I lov'd my Daughter much: But still I love  
My Country more.

ICILIUS.

Your Speech inflames my Zeal,  
I love my Country too.

VIRGINIUS.

Then live to serve it.---

VALERIUS.

Join, join against the common Enemy,  
Is now the Voice of ev'ry Roman.

VIRGINIUS.

Hence,

Vile Weapon, hence---Give me my Spear and Shield:  
Now the proud Sabines, the presumptuous Æqui,  
Shall quickly feel, from our resistless Rage,  
That Bondage is no more;---that APPIUS,  
The Foe to Liberty, no longer breathes.----

Learn hence what dreadful Woes on Vice attend:  
Remorse, foul Shame, and a disastrous End.  
Strong Proofs of this abound in ev'ry Age,  
Be such the Tragic Lessons of the Stage:---  
And be the Muse's sacred Moral, this:---  
The Paths of Virtue are the Paths of Bliss.-----





# E P I L O G U E.

Written by a FRIEND.

Spoken by Mrs. BELLAMY.

*I Told the Bard---(ay, yonder he stands quaking,  
Alas! poor Soul, he's in a piteous Taking! )---  
I hope, Sir, you'll excuse what I shall say:---  
But truly, Sir, I tremble for your Play.  
There's a wild Greatness in the Plot, I own:  
But then, I doubt, it may displease the Town.---  
" The Town (reply'd our Author) disapprove  
" A Plot that's built on Liberty and Love?  
" Is not the fav'rite Character a Woman?  
" The Moral chaste and pure? The Subject Roman?"---  
Roman indeed!---I hope such heath'nish Nonsense  
Will ne'er infect an honest Christian Conscience.---  
The Story may (for aught I know) be true:  
But here no Tale improbable will do.---  
What, rather perish by untimely Fate,  
Than smile upon a princely Magistrate!  
So rash, he could not reign another Year;  
So rich, she might have had Ten thousand clear?  
And then what wise Plebeian would decline  
A Match with the Decemvir's Concubine?---  
" How (says a Critic) quit her faithful Lover,  
" Young, handsome, brave, for such a wicked Rover?*

*" For*

## EPILOGUE.

“ For one---(a thousand other Faults combining)---  
“ That now was to the Vale of Years declining?”---  
So then, had APPIUS been but Five and Twenty,  
The Maid perhaps would not have prov'd so dainty.---

ICILIUS vow'd indeed, and promis'd well :  
But where was he when his VIRGINIA fell ?  
He should have screen'd from Death his blooming Bride ;  
Or dy'd,--like a true Lower,--by her Side.---  
VIRGINIA's Death he never could survive ;  
But that he was,--in Duty,--bound to live.---  
He liv'd then, to dissolve his Country's Chain ;  
Avenge his Mistress, and---make Love again.

Then for the grim old Sire, with Frenzy wild,  
To be the Butcher of his only Child !---  
True, 'twas the Virgin Daughter's Choice to die,  
Rather than bear to live with Infamy.---  
This must be Roman, English, or Romance :---  
Such Virtue would not be believ'd in France.

40

A N

"Appius," is the only play that John Moncrieff ever wrote. It was acted the same year that it was published, 1755, at Covent Garden, London.











